

DEBBIE LESKO
8TH DISTRICT, ARIZONA

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY
RANKING MEMBER, TRANSPORTATION AND
MARITIME SECURITY

COMMITTEE ON
THE JUDICIARY

COMMITTEE ON RULES

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0308

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The Honorable Mark Meadows
Chief of Staff
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Meadows,

As you negotiate on what items to include in the Phase IV COVID-19 Relief Package, we urge you to include a waiver for Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) fees for the remainder of FY 2020 and the entirety of FY 2021.

COVID-19 has caused substantial financial strain on electricity providers, as investor-owned utilities are not disconnecting power despite millions of Americans being unable to pay their monthly bill. To prevent the spread of COVID-19 and ensure safe and reliable power to its customers, nuclear operators are taking extra precautions at the generation sites that include PPE, temperature checks, and proper social distancing. As you know, this results in additional operations and maintenance costs. At the same time, power demand is down, and prices are at historic lows with millions of affected Americans unable to pay their power bills. The U.S. commercial nuclear energy industry is currently experiencing hardships at the utility level which in turn has begun to trickle down the supply chain.

For FY 2020, NRC fees borne by industry are slated to total up to \$728.5 million. For FY 2021, the budget proposed by the President would have those same fees increase to \$740.4 million. If these fees were waived, it could provide real material relief to companies trying to recover from COVID-19 related losses in the form of increased liquidity and cash flow. Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station, located in our home state of Arizona, is the largest net-generating nuclear station in the United States. Thus far, it has spent \$6 million on COVID-19 costs and anticipates spending \$9 million more by the end of 2020. These costs will only continue to occur in 2021.

Nuclear power is America's clean energy mainstay and provides over half of the country's carbon-free electricity. Right now, it is essential to take all measures possible to support America's nuclear industry so they can continue to put carbon-free electricity on the grid throughout our nation and power America with reliable and affordable electricity.

Waiving fees will not impact nuclear safety. This action would simply fund the NRC temporarily through the federal government to prevent further economic hardship to the nuclear industry. Thank you for considering this request as you negotiate the upcoming COVID-19 relief package.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Debbie Lesko". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Debbie" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Lesko".

Debbie Lesko
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Schweikert". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name "David" being the most legible part, followed by "Schweikert".

David Schweikert
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul A. Gosar". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name "Paul" and the last name "Gosar" being the most legible parts. There is a small mark at the end of the signature.

Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andy Biggs". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name "Andy" and the last name "Biggs" being the most legible parts.

Andy Biggs
Member of Congress